



ARCHBISHOP'S EASTER MESSAGE 2014

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Our Easter celebration begins with a proclamation of joy. *“Exult, let them exult, the hosts of heaven...let the trumpet of salvation sound aloud our mighty King’s triumph! Be glad, let earth be glad...!”*

God’s plan was to rescue people from sin, restoring us to friendship with himself. This has taken place in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ! God has come to us in the Incarnate Son to give us hope of eternal life and to bless us with Easter joy.

Christ the Lord comes to share with us his joy and peace, his Holy Spirit and the special gift of himself “in the breaking of the bread”—Holy Communion.

Our new life in Christ was proclaimed by the apostles to whom our Risen Lord appeared. The Church continues to repeat with amazement the apostles’ message that Jesus, the crucified one, is risen from the dead and remains with his people.

In his recent Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* (“*The Joy of the Gospel*”), Pope Francis reminds us of the joy God and his Son Jesus wish to share with us through the Holy Spirit:

“The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew” (EG #1).

Risen and alive, Jesus comes to us in the Easter Sacrament of Holy Communion. Today, in our churches, we recognize him “*in the breaking of the bread*” (Luke 24.35).

This explains the importance of the Sunday Eucharist in feeding our spiritual life. We endanger our faith if we neglect the Eucharist and undervalue at Mass the victory Christ has gained for us.

Today, as the Church celebrates our victory with Christ, we invite you to renew your commitment to sharing in Sunday Mass—the little Easter—every Sunday without fail. This is the sure path to the holiness that God wishes for you.

Pope Francis encourages the whole Church—our diocese, our parishes and groups, all of us—to become disciples who are also missionaries. Disciples learn from Jesus Christ every day. Missionaries share this Good News with others: your family members, fellow students, and associates at work and at recreation.

God bless you and Happy Easter!

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